

**REGULAR MEETING OF
BELMONT REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Tuesday, November 09, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER 7:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Mathewson, Warden, Feierbach, Bauer, Metropulos

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present: Interim Executive Director Rich, City Attorney Savaree, Community Development Director Ewing, Agency Secretary Cook.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Brownie Troop 3135, Central Elementary School, Claudia Wyatt, Leader.

ITEMS APPROVED ON CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of Minutes of Meeting of October 12, 2004.

ACTION: On a motion by Director Mathewson, seconded by Director Feierbach, the Consent Calendar was unanimously approved by a show of hands.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Response to Questions and Request for Direction on the Emmett House Project

Community Development Director Ewing that a proforma was developed outlining options for a one-, two-, or three-unit affordable housing configuration of the Emmett House at its proposed location on the corner of Sixth and O'Neill Avenues. He outlined the required subsidy from the Redevelopment Agency for each configuration. He noted that four units would a positive cash flow at the outset. He noted that the City would retain ownership and would need to manage the property if the units were available for sale, since Mid-Peninsula is involved with rental properties only.

Community Development Director Ewing also outlined the costs incurred to date for the receiving site, including improvements. He noted that the reimbursement to the low-to-moderate income (LMI) fund for the receiving site if not used for low-to-moderate housing would be \$573,000, and the reimbursement for the purchase of the Emmett House would be \$489,000. He clarified that if the LMI fund were to be reimbursed, the State could reallocate the monies if the fund balance was deemed to be excessive. He noted that staff was seeking direction regarding additional neighborhood outreach.

In response to Director questions, Community Development Director Ewing reviewed the various income levels for subsidy qualification. He noted that the bottom floor could be available for seniors, and could be made accessible for the disabled, and that the properties could be marketed to specific groups such as local government employees or teachers, if desired. He clarified that the number of units would dictate the amount of parking required.

Denny Lawhern, President, Belmont Historical Society (BHS), stated that BHS has been involved with this project since its inception. He noted that the original desire of BHS was to

preserve the structure at its current location, but it has supported the decision to move the Emmett House if it can be restored and preserved.

Anthony Thue, Sixth Avenue, stated that his opposition to moving the Emmett House was not an issue low-to-moderate income use. He noted that O'Neill is a busy street, with high traffic and parking volume. He also stated that parking restrictions would be difficult to police, and that he would support two high-end units, or senior housing.

Bob Carillo, Sixth Avenue, questioned the improvements that have been made on the site as outlined by staff. He stated there is no justification for the costs as presented. He commented that the Emmett House was purchased with low-to-moderate income funds because there were no other monies available, and there were no plans for the building at the time it was purchased. He recommended leaving it where it is.

Frank Sandifer, Paloma Avenue, expressed concern regarding the cost to move the building, and questioned whether the estimated costs included the foundation. He stated this project is being rushed through, and that no EIR was prepared. He commented that this would create a low cost district or a project that will destroy the perception of a downtown. He recommended using the property for parking and using the funds to help people pay rent. He commented that the reduction in police and fire protection is because of bad budget management, and that the monies used for the flood control work on the site were being paid on people's property tax bill.

Doug Ervin, Paloma Avenue, stated he is a retired engineer, and he disagrees with staff's assertion that seismic upgrades will not be required.

William Trevison, O'Neill Avenue, stated that Belmont has a history of not finishing projects. He commented this project would be a slum, and recommended making the property a parking lot.

Gene Dulek, Sixth Avenue, questioned the need to move the building, and questioned what would be done with the existing Emmett House site.

Jim Fetter, Sunnyslope Avenue, stated the Emmett House is the only historic building remaining. He recommended leaving it where it is, but commented that moving it is better than losing it. He noted that Belmont is losing its character, and is in favor of historic preservation.

Violeta Sue, O'Neill Avenue, stated that the crime rate is low and it was important to keep it low. She recommended leaving the Emmett House as is.

Bob Raymond, O'Neill Avenue, stated the neighborhood should be kept as is, and that if a private party submitted this project to the Planning Commission, it would be rejected. He also stated that plans have already been drawn up for moving the Emmett House and rezoning the property, and that a change in the right-of-way will be needed to accommodate the house. He questioned Agency members' support if the Emmett House were proposed for their neighborhood.

Lucile Raymond, O'Neill Avenue, stated that the Emmett House is too large for the site. She recommended leaving it where it is or move it to the park. She questioned where kids would play, where the garden would be, and how to enforce parking and the number of people. She asked that the Agency consider the neighbors' comments.

Community Development Director Ewing clarified that the improvements to the O'Neill site included slope stabilization, and he confirmed that low-to-moderate income funds were used. He noted that the building would meet code specifications, and clarified that a soils engineer provided information for the project estimates, which included all costs, including moving costs.

Director Feierbach stated that restoration of the Emmett House cannot be accomplished on the present site, and that low-to-moderate income monies cannot be spent for other purposes. She stated that before a final decision was reached a meeting should be held with the neighbors. She supported a configuration of two units for seniors or people employed in Belmont. She noted that the Historical Society should be consulted regarding historic significance, and that Sixth Avenue could be an historic district, as some historic buildings still remain. She commented that the neighbors should be receptive to discuss this issue.

Director Bauer stated that a community meeting should include all Directors.

Agency Chair Metropulos stated that he was concerned with the residents' use of terms such as projects, slum, and violent crime statistics, and clarified that he would qualify to live in this building. He also stated that decisions should be based on fact, not emotion.

Director Warden stated that if the Emmett House were to be left in its present location, it would not be preserved. He stated that historic preservation is a positive thing for the City. He noted that the vacant lot on O'Neill has development rights, and that a replica of the Emmett House could be built there. He supports a two-unit configuration, and marketing the property to seniors and City employees. He stated that this would not lower property values, and noted that monies had been spent on the receiving site, and the property should be utilized. He supports a meeting with the neighbors. He cited numerous other reports that have been presented regarding this building over the years, including a detailed analysis made on a number of options considered for the Emmett House. He recommended making this report available at the meeting.

Director Mathewson stated that the value of historic preservation should be considered.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 8:40 P.M.

Meeting tape-recorded and videotaped
Tape No. 594

Terri Cook
Agency Secretary